

City celebrates grand opening of Verdigris Water Treatment Plant

The new Verdigris Water Treatment Plant replaces the City's existing plant, which was constructed in 1966.

The City of Broken Arrow celebrated the opening of the Verdigris Water Treatment Plant with a ribbon cutting ceremony on Thursday, June 5.

Around 100 guests witnessed the ceremony at the new water plant. Speakers included City Manager Thomas Moton, former Engineering and Construction Director Kenny Schwab, Mayor Craig Thurmond, Utilities Director Anthony Daniel, Broken Arrow Chamber & Economic Development Corporation Director Wes Smithwick, Vice President of HDR Engineering Joel Cantwell, Project Manager Roger Hughes and Plant Manager Jimmy Helms.

The new Verdigris Water Treatment Plant replaces the City's existing plant, which was constructed in 1966 and utilizes a state-of-the-art membrane filtration system, which filters microorganisms better than conventional treatment methods by forcing water through extremely fine, porous tubes. The \$58 million plant is the largest membrane water treatment facility in Oklahoma and one of the largest in the United States.

The new plant will provide up to 20 million gallons a day (MGD) of water, with the option to expand to 40 MGD as the City's population grows. During warmer weather, the plant has a 28 MGD capacity.



Broken Arrow City Councilors joined in the festivities at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the water treatment plant. From left, Councilor Mike Lester, Mayor Craig Thurmond, Vice Mayor Richard Carter, Councilor Johnnie Parks and Councilor Jill Norman

Broken Arrow averages about 12 million gallons of water a day and peaks around 27 MGD during the summer months.

For more than 30 years, the City has purchased water from the Oklahoma Ordnance Works Authority (OOWA) in Pryor, Oklahoma. That partnership will be maintained, as a way to minimize water service disruptions. It is the City's intent that OOWA be the primary secondary source of water. In addition, the City constructed a 24-inch water line from Tulsa, which has the ability to take about five (5) million gallons of water from the Tulsa Municipal Authority. Both partnerships will create a redundant system, which will help ensure a continuous water supply to the community.

With the new plant, the City will have complete control of its water supply; from primary and secondary disinfection to physically acquiring water from the Verdigris River.

In 2004, City Council established the Long Range Water Supply Committee to study the community's future water supply needs.

Council in 2006 adopted the committee's recommendations and later authorized a professional engineering consulting firm to develop a Water Supply System Master Plan. In 2012, Council approved financing through the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, and construction began in March of that year.

The new plant began treating water on April 10.

'Chalk It Up'

**Rescheduled
event Sept. 19-20**

Back for a third year is Broken Arrow's popular "Chalk It Up" chalk art festival.

The chalk art festival has been rescheduled for Sept. 19-20 in the Rose District.

The event was rescheduled from June due to weather.

The event is sponsored by the Broken Arrow Parks, Recreation, Cultural Affairs and Tourism Department and the Broken Arrow Arts and Humanities Council.

The event will take place from 8 p.m.-midnight, Sept. 19 and 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Sept. 20.

The festival includes street performers and live music entertainment.

Visitors will also have the opportunity to vote for their favorite artist in each age group and category.

For more information, artists should call 918-994-4473.



City Council approves water, sewer, stormwater rate increases

Broken Arrow City Councilors approved new utility rates that became effective July 1.

Engineering firm Black and Veatch recommended the rate changes, after completing a comprehensive utility study that analyzed the City's cost of providing water, sewer, stormwater and flood control services.

"The comprehensive rate study by Black and Veatch provides an objective analysis of the City's actual cost of providing services to its customers," said City Manager Thom Moton. "At the same time, the study calculates how much revenue the City needs to generate in order to keep up with the cost of providing those services at a level expected by customers."

A typical residential customer using 7,000 gallons of water per month will see their water bill increase \$2.31 per month and their sewer bill increase \$1.61 per month, for a combined increase of \$3.92 per month.

The last utility rate change occurred in January 2012.

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The utility rate increase went into affect July 1.

The rate increases will not only cover the cost of operations, it will also help pay for utilities infrastructure, such as replacing old sewer and waterlines, purchasing automated meter reading equipment, upgrading the Haikey Creek and Lynn Lane wastewater treatment plants, as well as paying the loan on the new \$58 million Verdigris River Water Treatment Plant and building fund balances to meet City policies. Capital improvement projects for infrastructure were deferred during the recession.

The City has an aging infrastructure that has not kept up with growth. Capital improvement investments are needed in order to:

- Minimize service disruptions;
- Ensure the system works as intended; and
- Comply with state and federal regulatory standards.

The Black and Veatch rate study

recommends a series of rate increases over the next five years, although City Council has only approved the rate increase as outlined in the FY15 budget.

Staff will monitor the utilities’ financial condition as a result of the first rate increase and make a recommendation to Council whether subsequent rate increases are needed.

Council would consider any subsequent rate increases during the Fiscal Year 2015/2016 budget process.

A comparison chart showing how Broken Arrow rates compare to surrounding communities is attached.

Even with the FY15 rate increases, Broken Arrow’s utility rates remain far lower than surrounding communities.

When comparing rates for the average residential customer, Broken Arrow is currently the third lowest among 26 cities, including Tulsa, Owasso, Sand Springs, Bixby and Jenks.

The new rate increase will make Broken Arrow rates the seventh lowest.

Read the complete Black and Veatch report at www.brokenarrowok.gov.

Council approves FY 2015 budget

The Broken Arrow City Council on recently approved the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget, which will go into effect July 1, and the Fiscal Year 2016 Financial Plan. Fiscal Year 2015 (FY15) begins July 1, 2014 and ends June 30, 2015.

This is the first time City Council has adopted a two-year budget and financial plan.

This type of budget planning allows the City to better prepare for future expenses, by getting a longer range estimate of sales tax revenues, which fluctuate from month to month.

The FY15 Budget is made up of twenty-five (25) funds, which include the General Fund, the Broken Arrow Municipal Authority (BAMA) and the Broken Arrow Economic Development Authority (BAEDA).

Total FY15 revenues are projected to be \$155,551,238. This is an increase of 4.23 percent from the current fiscal year.

Total FY15 expenditures are planned at \$162,090,103. This is 5.49 percent below the current fiscal year’s estimated expenditures.

Fund balances of \$8,960,165 will be used to bridge the gap between revenues and expenditures.

The fund balances to be used are:

- General Fund: \$1,214,000
- BAMA: \$2,443,800
- 2008 General Obligation Bonds: \$3,467,000
- 2011 General Obligation Bonds: \$570,000
- Special revenue, other miscellaneous funds:

\$1,265,365

Fund balances are a buildup of revenues greater than expenditures in any budget year.

“I am very concerned about our deficit spending,” said Mayor Craig Thurmond. “But our employees have always stepped up during a financial crisis and found ways to save money. I’m confident they’ll do the same to help us get through this next fiscal year.”

General fund highlights

The General Fund is the City’s primary operating fund. It makes up 41 percent of the total FY15 budget.

Projected revenue growth can be attributed to a 3.5 percent increase in sales tax revenues, as well as payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) fees from BAMA.

Additionally, new revenues will be generated from increasing various development fees, the ambulance rate and school resource officer (SRO) contracts with Broken Arrow Public Schools.

FY15 expenses are budgeted 1.72 percent higher than the last fiscal year. The FY15 budget excludes a general wage increase and the soft hiring freeze will continue.

Eligible employees will receive satisfactory performances increases, which the City calls a "step increase."

A copy of the FY15 Budget and FY16 Financial Plan can be viewed at www.brokenarrowok.gov/fy15budget.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR SEPTEMBER 1-30

Sept. 1 — City offices closed for Labor Day.

Sept. 2 — '9/11 We Remember' Golf Tournament 7 a.m.-2 p.m., Golf Club of Oklahoma, 20400 E. 141st St. Benefitting Blue Star Moms, Broken Arrow Chapter. Join us for championship golf, awards, prizes, continental breakfast, BBQ lunch, and the opportunity to Support Our Troops! Fore more, call 918-259-9479.

Sept. 2 — Broken Arrow City Council 6:30 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 220 S. First St.

Sept. 4 — Thursday Night Live 7-8:30 p.m., Farmers Market, 418 S. Main St. Travis McClearn (Acoustic, Jazz, Folk). Free and open to the public. Bring your own lawn chair and refreshments.

Sept. 5 — Art Night 5-8 p.m., Your Design, 211 S. Main St. Easels, and a few supplies will be provided. This is not a class, but an atmosphere of creation, inspiration and encouragement. For additional information, call 918-994-4473.

Sept. 6 — Broken Arrow Farmers Market 8 a.m.-noon., 418 S. Main St. Free and open to the public.

Sept. 9 — Downtown Advisory Board 4 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 220 S. First St.

Sept. 11 — Thursday Night Live 7-8:30 p.m., Farmers Market, 418 S. Main St.. Gypsy Twang (Country, Folk). Free and open to the public. Bring your own lawn chair and refreshments.

Sept. 13 — Broken Arrow Farmers Market 8 a.m.-noon., 418 S. Main St. Free and open to the public.

Sept. 16 — Broken Arrow City Council 6:30 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 220 S. First St.

Sept. 18 — Thursday Night Live 7-8:30 p.m., Farmers Market, 418 S. Main St.. Performer TBA. Free and open to the public. Bring your own lawn chair and refreshments.

Sept. 19 — Art Night 5-8 p.m., Your Design, 211 S. Main St. Easels, and a few supplies will be provided. This is not a class, but an atmosphere of creation, inspiration and encouragement. For additional information, call 918-994-4473.

Sept. 19-20 — 'Chalk it Up' chalk art festival The Broken Arrow Parks and Recreation Department and the Broken Arrow Arts and Humanities Council will be presenting "Chalk It Up" chalk art festival from 8 p.m. to midnight Sept. 19 and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sept. 20 on Main Street. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, contact 918-259-7007.

Sept. 20 — Broken Arrow Farmers Market 8 a.m.-noon., 418 S. Main St. Free and open to the public.

Sept. 20 — Heart of Broken Arrow Craft and Jewelry Show 9 a.m.-4 p.m., 1500 S. Main St. Free and open to the public.

Sept. 25 — Broken Arrow Planning Commission 5 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 220 S. First St.

Sept. 25 — Thursday Night Live 7-8:30 p.m., Farmers Market, 418 S. Main St.. Performer TBA. Free and open to the public. Bring your own lawn chair and refreshments.